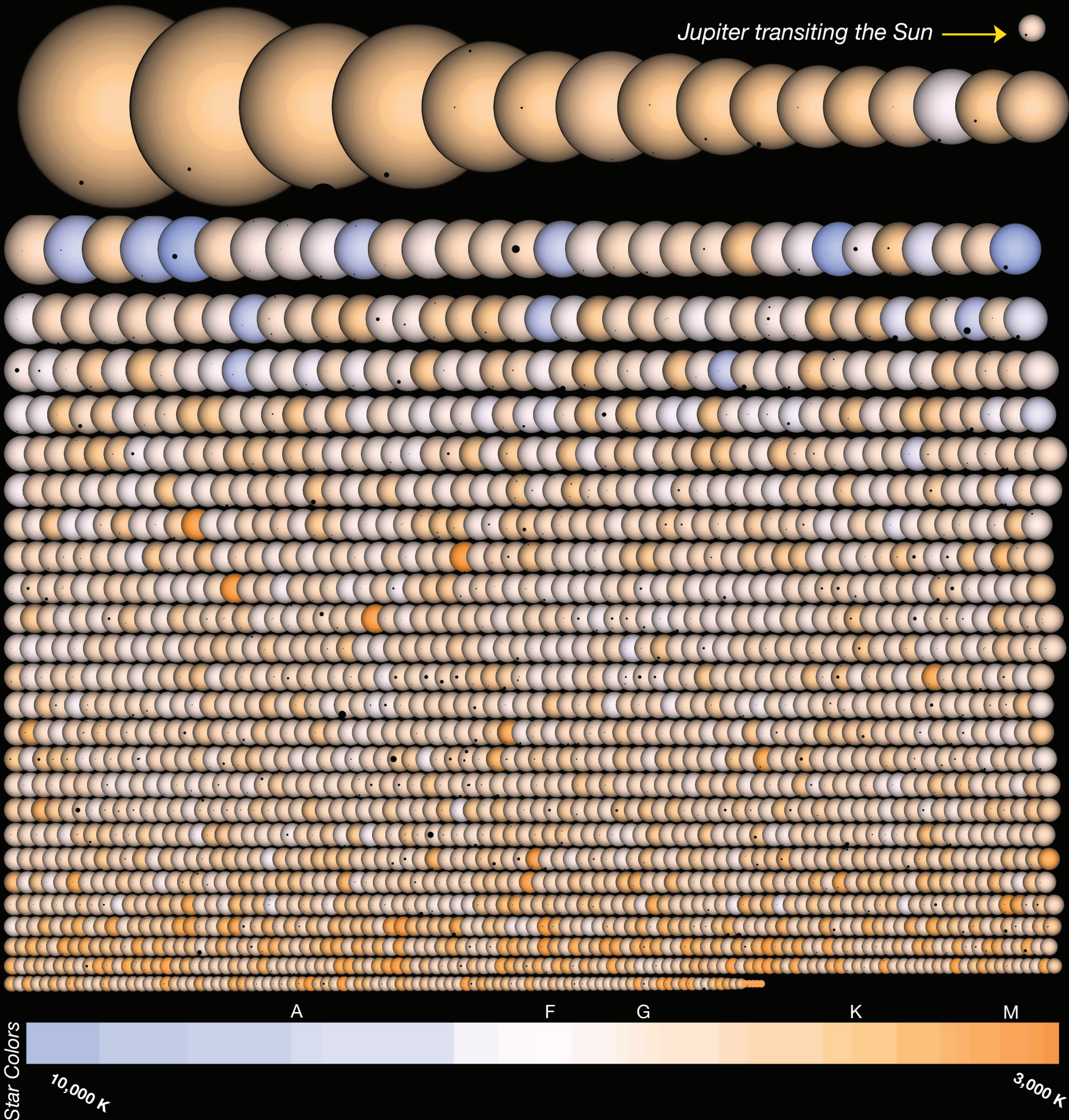




KEPLER'S PLANET CANDIDATES

2,326 AS OF DECEMBER 5, 2011



Using NASA's planet-hunting *Kepler* spacecraft, astronomers have discovered 2,326 candidate planets orbiting other suns in a search for Earth-size worlds that began in 2009. *Kepler* monitors a rich star field for planetary transits, which cause a slight dimming of starlight when a planet crosses the face of its star. In "Kepler's Planet Candidates," the systems are ordered by star diameter. The star's color represents its temperature as shown in the lower scale, and the letters (A, F, G, K, M) are how astronomers classify star types. The simulated stellar disks and the planet silhouettes are shown at the same scale, with saturated star colors. Look carefully: some systems have multiple planets. For reference, Jupiter is shown transiting the Sun. Higher resolutions of this graphic are available at <http://Kepler.NASA.gov/images/graphics>